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(21) Application No. 14896/75 (22) Filed 11 April 1975

(23) Complete Specification filed 7 April 1976

(44) Complete Specification published 14 Dec. 1977

(51) INT. CL. A41G 3/00, 5/00

(52) Index at acceptance
A4V 23C

(54) IMPROVEMENTS RELATING TO WIGS OR HAIRPIECES AND METHOD OF ATTACHMENT

(71) I, MICHAEL ANTHONY JONES, a British Subject, of 6 Kingsleigh Drive, Rectory Hill, Castle Bromwich, Birmingham 36, formerly, of 218 Chester Road, Castle Bromwich, Birmingham 36, do hereby declare the invention for which I pray that a patent may be granted to me, and the method by which it is to be performed, to be particularly described in and by the following statement:

This invention relates to a wig or hairpiece and its method of attachment to the head. The expression "hairpiece" is used hereinafter in a generic sense as meaning either a complete wig which simulates a whole head of hair or a smaller piece which simulates only part of a head of hair.

A hairpiece comprises a base layer of suitable material to which the strands of real or artificial hair are attached and one method of attachment of the hairpiece to the head now being practised makes use of live natural hair remaining on the head of the person being fitted with the hairpiece. In this method some of the remaining natural hair is plaited to form a "rope" extending from one side of the head around the back to the other side continuously or possibly intermittently, depending upon the amount of the natural hair which is remaining. The peripheral edge of the hairpiece is then anchored to this rope of natural hair by a stitching operation.

Whilst this method provides an adequate anchorage for the hairpiece it does have certain drawbacks. Due to the normal growth of the natural hair remaining on the head, the connection between the hairpiece and the rope of natural hair will tend to loosen somewhat after a period of time and eventually it becomes necessary for the wearer to return to the specialist who originally fitted the hairpiece to have it removed and the fixing operation repeated to make the hairpiece again fit correctly.

Also, during the wearing of such a hairpiece, if it becomes necessary for the wearer to attend to the scalp for cleaning or other purposes again it is necessary for the specialist to be visited in order for the hairpiece to be removed and then replaced.

The object of the present invention is to provide an improved method of attachment of a hairpiece and an improved hairpiece for use in such method so as to obviate the abovementioned drawbacks.

According to one aspect of the invention I provide a method of attaching a hairpiece to a head having some existing hair and using a two-part separable fastener of the kind wherein each part is in the form of a flexible strip having fastening elements on one face thereof for co-operation with the fastening elements on the other strip to secure the strips releasably in any selected overlapping relation, the method comprising the steps of attaching one part of the fastener to the hairpiece, attaching the other part of the fastener directly to the existing hair and then securing the fastener parts to each other with a selected area of overlap.

By the qualification "directly" is meant in a manner not employing intermediate fasteners between the existing hair and the strip. A fastener part attached to the existing hair by stitching or by means of an adhesive is attached directly. The adhesive may be carried on a strip of sheet material, both faces of which carry layers of adhesive.

A hairpiece which has been attached by a method in accordance with the invention can easily be removed and replaced by the wearer. Furthermore, the hairpiece can be adjusted relative to the existing hair by adjusting the position of one part of the fastener relative to the other part, provided that there is some overlap between the two parts of the fastener.

According to a further aspect of the invention I provide a combination of a hair

piece and a two-part separable fastener, one part of the fastener being attached to the hairpiece, wherein each part of the fastener consists only of a flexible strip having fastening elements on one face thereof for co-operation with the fastening elements on the other strip to secure the strips releasably in any selected overlapping relation.

The invention will now be described by way of example with reference to the accompanying drawings, wherein:—

FIGURES 1 and 2 illustrate successive steps in the application of one part of a two part separable fastener to a head, and

FIGURE 3 illustrates the one part of the fastener attached to existing hair on the head and a hairpiece having the other part of the fastener and being ready for application to the head.

In Figure 3 of the accompanying drawings, there is shown a hairpiece 10 which is to be attached to a head 11 having some existing hair 12. The head may be that of a person or a dummy head for displaying the hairpiece. A pair of two part separable fasteners is used for attaching the hairpiece to the head, one fastener being disposed at each side of the head. One part, 13, of each fastener is attached to the existing hair 12 on the head and the other part 14 is attached to the hairpiece at the inside and near to the margin thereof.

In the embodiment of the invention which is illustrated, each two part separable fastener is of the type which is presently known under the name of "Velcro" (registered Trade Mark) and which comprises one flexible strip having on one face a number of very small hook-like fingers and a second flexible strip having on one face a felt-like layer comprising a mass of loops or partial loops of very fine synthetic fibres so that when the two parts of the fastener are pressed together, the hooks on the one part engage in the felt-like layer of the other part and form a firm fastening which can, however, be easily separated by peeling one strip away from the other.

The part 14 of each fastener, which may comprise the hook-like fingers, or the felt-like material, is stitched to the hairpiece 10. The part 13 of each fastener is attached to the existing hair 12 by an adhesive. On the back of the part 13 of each fastener, that is the face thereof which is remote from the part 14 when the parts are connected together, there is provided a layer of adhesive. This adhesive is carried on a first face of a strip 15 of sheet material, a second face of which is secured by means of a further layer of adhesive to the back of the fastener part 13. A further strip 16 of sheet material is connected with the strip 15 by a hinge portion 17, the

strips 15 and 16 being end-to-end so that they can be brought into mutually-overlapping relation. The strips 15 and 16 are preferably integral with each other.

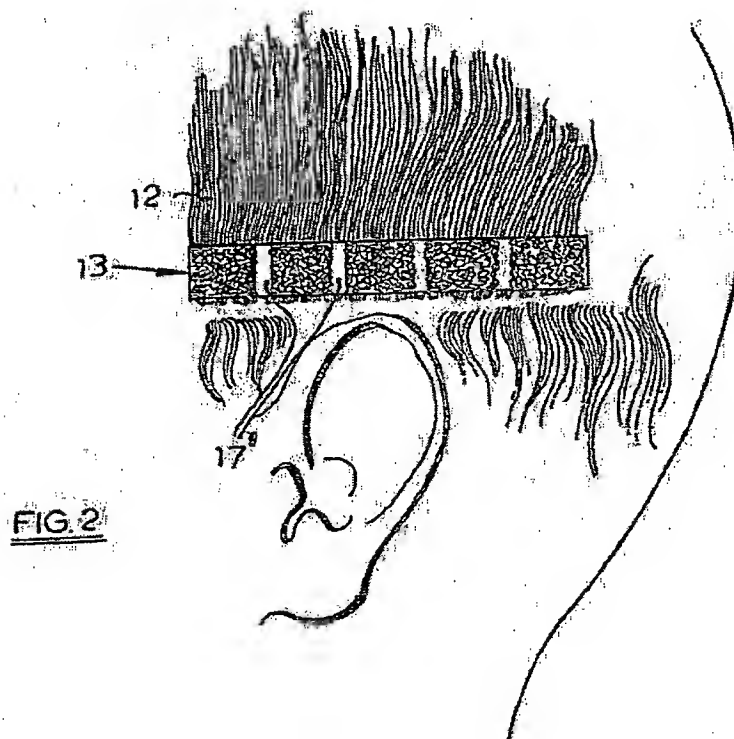
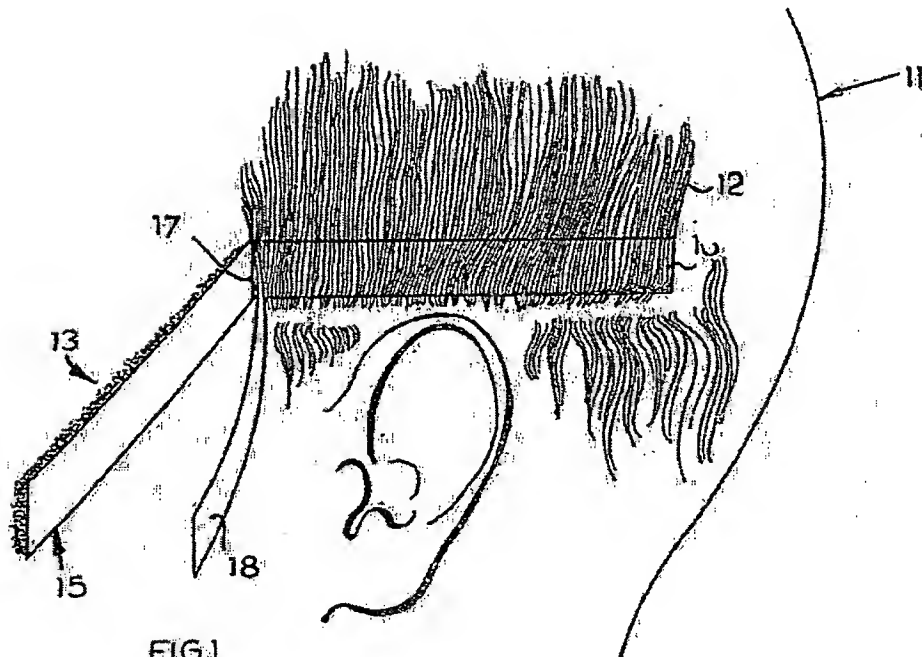
That face of the strip 16 which is presented towards the strip 15 when the strips are in mutually-overlapping relation bears a layer of adhesive. This layer of adhesive and the layer of adhesive on the first face of the strip 15 are protected, prior to use, with a removable strip 18 of paper or plastics film. The other face of the strip 16 is not adhesive.

The part 13 of each fastener is attached to the head 11 in the following manner. The protective layer 18 is removed from the layer of adhesive on the strip 16. This strip is then laid against the head in an appropriate position, generally at the upper edge of the existing hair 12, with the adhesive layer presented outwardly. Some of the existing hair 12 is then directed upwardly over the exposed face of the strip 16 as shown in Figure 1. The protective layer is then removed from the adhesive on the strip 15 and this strip is brought into fully overlapping relation with the strip 16 so that the upwardly directed hair is trapped between and adhered to the strips 15 and 16. Any hair which projects substantially above the upper edges of the strips is then turned downwardly over the fastener part 13.

To ensure that the downwardly directed hair overlying the fastener part 13 does not prevent proper co-operation between the fastener parts 13 and 14, a number of channels 17 are cut in the fastener part 13, each channel extending from the upper edge to the lower edge and the channels being spaced apart along the fastener part. The downwardly-directed hair is confined within these channels so that it is held clear of those areas of the fastener part which lie between the channels.

When the parts 13 of both of the fasteners have been attached to the head 11, the hairpiece 10 is applied to the head so that the fastener part 14 of each fastener is brought into at least partially overlapping relation with the corresponding fastener part 13. Partial overlap between the fastener parts 13 and 14 forms a sufficiently firm connection to hold the hairpiece 10 securely in the required position. The amount of overlap can therefore be adjusted to obtain the best fit of the hairpiece on the head.

It will be understood that, in a case where the hair 12 is natural hair on a person's head, his hair will grow and the position of the fastener parts 13 on the head will vary accordingly. The good fit of the hairpiece on the head can be maintained by occasionally adjusting the position of

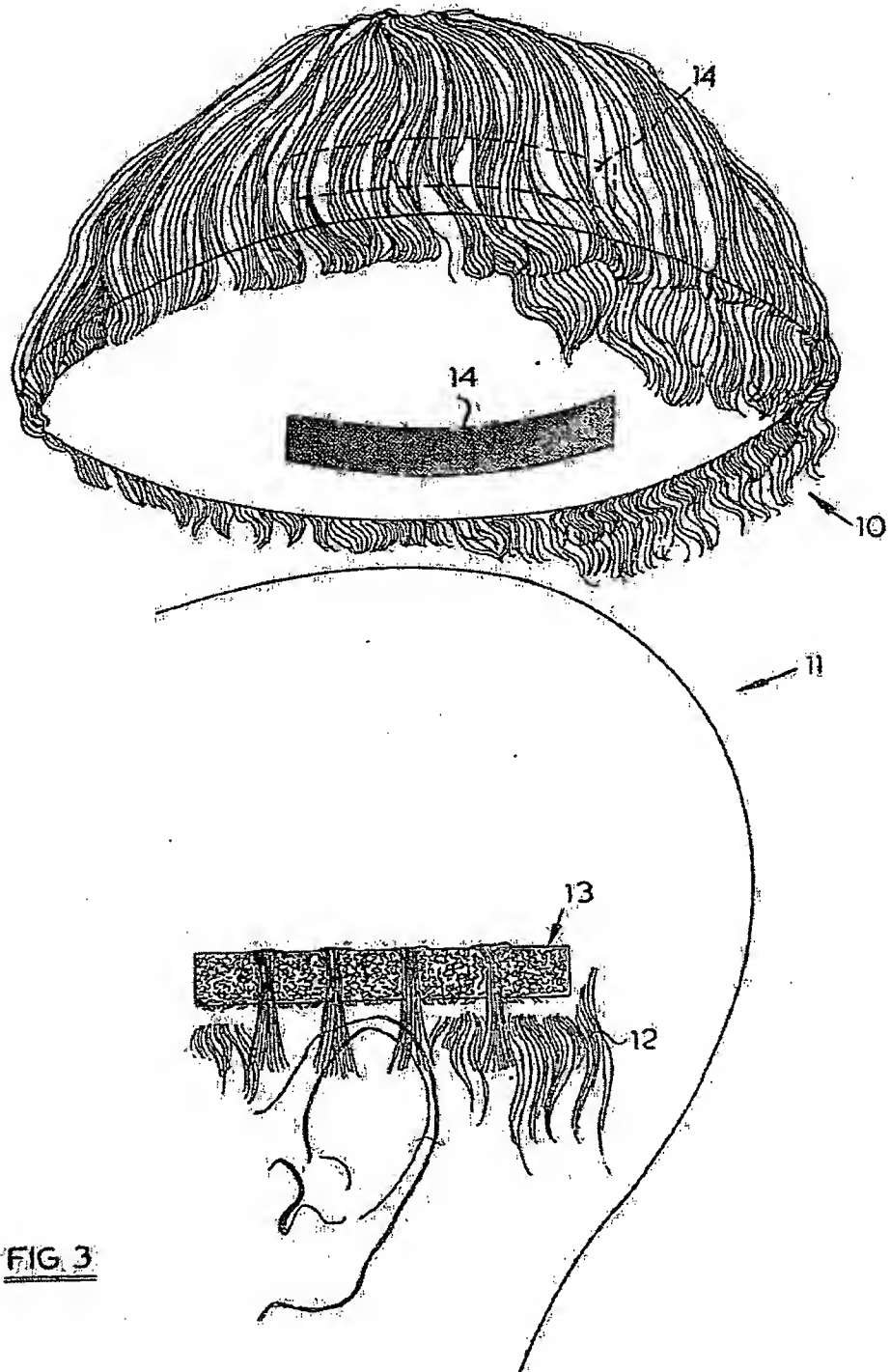


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COMPLETE SPECIFICATION

2 SHEETS

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SHEET 2



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